

OGC Has Reviewed

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6 June 1967

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT : GARRISON TV Interviews of 21 May 1967 and
28 May 1967

1. An analytical review and appraisal of GARRISON's charges against the Agency is attached.

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2. Without exception his allegations are false. They are the grossest we have seen from any responsible American official in the whole course of our [REDACTED] study. To give him the benefit of the doubt, GARRISON has translated the issue into a ward heeler's fight in the worst domestic political tradition. This is an unfair contest from the Agency point of view.

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3. Both singly and in their totality, GARRISON's allegations warrant timely, energetic counteraction.

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1. The Shreveport Journal of 22 May 1967 contains the full text of a New Orleans TV interview of District Attorney James C. GARRISON, conducted by a newsman named Robert Jones on 21 May 1967. We also have the complete text of a TV (ABC network, Station WMAL) interview of GARRISON held on 28 May 1967 in Washington, D.C., by Robert Clark and Thomas Jarriel.

2. In both interviews, but especially in the first, GARRISON attacked CIA more vehemently, viciously, and mendaciously than has any other American official or private citizen whose comments have come to our attention. In fact, he outstripped the foreign Communist press, which is now quoting him delightedly.

3. GARRISON's accusations against CIA are (1) that both David Ferrie and Oswald were working for CIA; (2) that CIA is conspiring to conceal the true facts of the assassination; (3) that President Kennedy was killed by CIA employees; (4) that CIA is withholding information that GARRISON needs; (5) that CIA is obstructing the course of justice in Louisiana to hide its own role in the assassination; (6) that CIA wields enormous, totalitarian powers and is a menace to American democracy; and (7) that CIA should be drastically curtailed or destroyed.

4. Each of these themes follows, with illustrative quotations from GARRISON. Quotations followed by the symbol (A) are from the ABC interview.

David Ferrie Was and Was Not a CIA Agent*

* GARRISON was in the FBI at one time and probably follows the Bureau's usage of agent to mean a staff employee.

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"But Ferrie's role in the summer of '63 was...well, he was an intermediary. He was not a CIA agent, for example. He did not carry a CIA card. He was, if you were to ask the CIA, 'Did David Ferrie work for you', you would receive a very polished lie from Washington, which they are very practised and adept at."

"Ferrie worked for the CIA in Florida in 1961.... He was making flights for them."

Lee Harvey Oswald Was and Was Not a CIA Agent

"...he was an anti-Communist who was working for the CIA."

"Lee Harvey Oswald was not an agent of the Central Intelligence Agency. He was...an employee of the Central Intelligence Agency...."

"The Central Intelligence Agency failed to reveal... its activities...in New Orleans when Lee Oswald was working for it...."

"No, he [Oswald] was not a CIA agent. He was obviously an intelligence employee of the United States government. This - this is so obvious that I don't see how they hid it. First of all, his associations at the time...here's a boy who went into the Marines when he was 17. He'd never shown any interest in languages of any kind. He was word blind which makes it impossible to learn languages by yourself, and that's brought out in the Warren Commission."

"All of a sudden he's speaking Russian fluently. Obviously through one of our intelligence cram courses by our own forces. And then he's at a Soviet base which has - had at that time a CIA function, I understand."* (A)

"For example, when, after his so-called Communist activities, he wanted to get in December of 1963 a passport to Europe, he got it in 24 hours. And you couldn't do that." (A)

* Comment: This remark may have been a slip of the tongue. "Informed Sources" have been quoted (New Orleans States-Item of 5 May 1967) as claiming that "Oswald" may have been trained as an intelligence agent at Japan's Atsugi Air Force Base, a known CIA instruction camp." Although Oswald was stationed at Atsugi as a Marine, he had no contact with CIA there.

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"Other - other indications of Oswald connections with the Central Intelligence Agency are the fact that even while in the Marines, when stationed at El Toro, as we know from the testimony of Nelson Delgado (?), Cary Thornley, (?) and other individuals, even the Warren Commission itself, Oswald had a higher security clearance than the rest of his Marine buddies." (A)

"And it - the indications go on and on. The telephone number of the local office of the Central Intelligence Agency is in the front of Oswald's book and very thinly disguised, simple code to himself, and if you accumulate the associations of his conduct, there's no question about it." (A)

CIA is Engaged in a Conspiracy to Conceal the Truth about the Assassination

"The Central Intelligence Agency began its criminal activities, in my judgment, immediately after the assassination when they failed to reveal to the Federal Bureau of Investigation in its entirety what its activities were in New Orleans when Lee Oswald was working for it and it has compounded them since by essentially criminal activities by making every possible effort to block our investigation."

"The serious thing to me is the conspiracy...by that agency of the federal government, the Central Intelligence Agency, to keep those facts from the American people, from the Warren commission, from the world at large."

"Now, again, I'm not casting judgment on---on the Bureau, because I think that a large part of the facts were withheld from the FBI by the CIA...." (A)

President Kennedy was Assassinated by CIA Employees

"Lee Harvey Oswald...was an employee of the Central Intelligence Agency as were the anti-Castro Cubans with whom he associated.... And every one of them was on the Central Intelligence Agency's payroll."

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"But purely and simply it's a case of former employees of the CIA, a large number of them Cubans, having a venomous reaction from the Bay of Pigs...."

"They [CIA] know the name of every man involved and the name of the individuals who pulled the triggers from the grassy knoll and stonewall area. And they know that they did it because they were former employees of CIA while they were training in New Orleans in the summer of 1963."

"...our investigation of the activities of Lee Oswald in New Orleans show that his associations in New Orleans during the six months he was there were not merely frequently, were not merely most of the time, but were continually and exclusively with individuals employed by the Central Intelligence Agency." (A)

"...a spinoff, in effect, apparently occurred and President Kennedy was killed by these same individuals. Now, what the CIA did do, and I presume it rationalized this in terms of national security, it concealed from the Warren Commission, from the American people, from the President and from the world the fact that its employees, its former employees were involved in the assassination of the president." (A)

"In the late summer of '63, for the first time, the Administration started putting the detente and the specific affect (sic) and started cutting down on some of CIA's activities. At this time our evidence is that the... anti-Kennedy feelings of some of these...Cuban individuals and other Latin individuals became venomous...." (A)

CIA is Keeping Information from GARRISON

"But we don't know which one [of the assassins] was standing where and we can't find out with the CIA keeping its vaults locked."

"The problem is getting the final details when they are in the custody of...the CIA."

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CIA is Obstructing the Course of Justice in Louisiana
in an Attempt to Conceal its Role in the Assassination

"This is a conspiracy, I think obviously engineered by the CIA, to derail us."

"...we're having such tremendous difficulty getting them [witnesses who have left Louisiana] back. That of course is through the intercession of the CIA which has great power."

"...the Central Intelligence Agency is through devious ways and through intermediaries actually paying lawyers to block the completion of the investigation.... What it's doing, it's a criminal act. And if the director of the CIA and the top officials of the CIA were in the jurisdiction of Louisiana I would charge them without hesitation."

"It is obvious to me, and we have evidence in some cases, that these lawyers [representing Sandra HOFFETT, Gordon NOVEL, Sergio ARCACHA Smith, and Alvin BEAUBOUFF] are being paid by the Central Intelligence Agency. So you have the effect of the CIA actually being used to thwart justice here so it won't be embarrassed.... And the reason we're having trouble is there are people in Washington, oh, without any question the Central Intelligence Agency, who do not want it brought out how President Kennedy was killed, who do not want the people to know."

"...the Central Intelligence Agency...if it wants could in the next 60 minutes give us the name of every last Cuban involved...."

"...we are blocked by this glass wall of this totalitarian powerful agency which is worried about its power, because it's desperate."

"And we are being blocked completely by the CIA... it is apparent to me that the CIA is engineering this because its future, its prestige is at stake, and above all, its power."

"The Central Intelligence Agency...has answered your question itself, because otherwise, were they not in a position of having to hide something...they would not have

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to hire lawyers to try and stop the case. The - every lawyer involved in this case, without exception, involved in the attempts to derail the investigation, to stop the case, has been connected by us with the Central Intelligence Agency.

"One lawyer, Mr. Plotkin, has publicly admitted that his client* worked for the Central Intelligence Agency. He has also admitted that he is being paid by the Central Intelligence Agency, and every other lawyer in the case we have connected with them, with the Central Intelligence Agency.

"Mr. Burton Klein and his alleged client Boba (?)** were flown to Washington, all expenses paid.

"The point is, if the Central Intelligence Agency is not involved, then what on earth are they working so hard to stop the investigation for?" (A)

"If I had any specific names, any specific evidence, the last agency in the world [to] which I would give it at this point is the Central Intelligence Agency, Bob. It's doing everything it can to obstruct us. We have asked them for information. For example, the picture which we know that they took of Lee Harvey Oswald coming out of the Cuban embassy in Mexico City, when -- at which time he was walking with a known employee of the Central Intelligence Agency, and all we receive is double talk. So we're certainly not going to ask them for anything." (A)

The Enormous, Totalitarian Power Wielded by CIA is a
Menace to the American Democracy

"Once this tragedy occurred, the CIA's attitude seemed to have been, well, President Kennedy is a casualty of the cold war.... The cold war must go on. The cover must be kept."

"Its power has just continued untouched, when actually its power as a result of this demonstration of totalitarian police state tactics, its power should be stripped."

* Gordon Dwane NOVEL

** Alvin BEAUBOUET

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"...the main fault in this thing is the Central Intelligence Agency and its fantastic power, its totally undemocratic power. It does not have to account for its funds."

"The CIA, as I have learned from this case...has infinitely more power than the Gestapo and the NKVD of Russia combined."

"That's what we have...you have a totalitarian power in your country, and we have in the CIA today, because of that." (A)

CIA Should Be Cut Back Drastically or Destroyed

"...we have drifted away from our constitution too far. The CIA, for example, regards the state as an inconvenience.... Well, this is wrong and the country won't survive in the way we've known unless we change it and the change has to begin in this case with that federal agency which has concealed the true facts of the assassination, whose employees were involved in the assassination, and it knows this, and that is the Central Intelligence Agency."

"...its power should be stripped. It should be cut down tremendously and made responsible to Congress."

"One of the things I'm sure it's worried about is that Congress may begin to get curious about this monstrosity, this cancer...and begin to apply controls which should have been applied a long time ago."

"...the first rule of the CIA is that the end justifies the means, which is one reason it should be eliminated and reorganized, because you cannot have any agency in a democracy which really believes that the end justifies the means."

"Actually what you have mentioned is the proper place for it, and that is a Congressional inquiry into the CIA's activities. All of our evidence will be made available to the CIA*, and if they looked into it seriously, there's no question in my mind, but what the CIA will be reorganized. Of course, we need an intelligence operation, but will be

* It is believed that GARRISON meant to say, "All of our evidence about CIA will be made available to Congress."

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reorganized so it has Congressional controls. You cannot have in a democracy an organization which really believes that the end justifies the means, and which is not responsive at all to the representatives of the people in Congress."

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